



State Board of Education Resolution
Social Studies Standards Guiding Principles
SR20-15

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia’s social studies standards (“standards”) were last updated in 2006, and pre-date the existence of the State Board of Education and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education;

WHEREAS, social studies is typically defined by courses in the areas of history, government, economics, civics, and geography;

WHEREAS, a revision of the standards presented an opportunity for the District’s social studies standards to be culturally responsive, anti-racist, to impart important social studies content in the early grades, strengthen student knowledge of democratic principles and values, and promote civic engagement;

WHEREAS, the DC State Board of Education, in *SR19-7 Implementation of Working Group Proposals*, approved the creation of a multi-year plan to revise and update state social studies standards with the goal to approve new standards for implementation by school year 2022–23;

WHEREAS, the State Board established a Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee (SSSAC) in July 2020 comprised of a diverse and knowledgeable cohort of 26 members that represent Pre-K–12 teachers and curriculum experts, school district leaders, parents, students, higher education personnel, and experts from organizations in relevant social science fields;

WHEREAS, the SSSAC has met monthly to develop Guiding Principles for consideration by the State Board, as well as engaged in public outreach with SSSAC member’s constituents and District residents on their satisfaction with the current standards and the skills that they feel public-school students should know by the time they graduate; and,

WHEREAS, the Guiding Principles have been vigorously discussed at SSSAC meetings and have been submitted to the public for comment.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the State Board adopts the Social Studies Standards Guiding Principles as submitted by the Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee and approves their submission to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the State Board advises the State Superintendent that the revised standards should include a thread aimed at developing student understanding of key principles of democratic society (e.g., equality, checks and balances, first amendment, federalism, etc.), how and why this vision was so different from what had typically existed in the past, how it is different from other countries today, the fragility of these principles, how democratic societies have failed in the past, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society;





BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the State Board advises the State Superintendent that they should ensure that an explicit, ongoing thread be included on the history of African-Americans, including their treatment by society and our legal system and their role in and impact on United States history, including on the growth and evolution of legal equality and democratic rights and the creation of a multicultural, democratic society is given its full due in the revised standards;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the State Board advises the State Superintendent that they should ensure that an explicit, ongoing thread on the continuing tension in American history between the promise of democracy and equality in the founding documents and the reality of inequality; about how these principles and human rights have evolved in the United States over time, including an emphasis on how they have been propelled by various social movements and, especially, by the stop-and-go efforts over time to repair the initial sin of slavery and the subsequent unequal treatment of African-Americans and other groups that have not been centered; and the tension between United States pressure on other nations to respect human rights, while the United States is violating the rights of United States citizens at home is included in the new proposed standards; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, the State Board advises the State Superintendent that they should ensure that an explicit, ongoing thread that provides students with a global perspective and global context for their own lives, their history, and their society; that equips students with the content knowledge, skills, experiences, and mindsets that will help prepare them for careers and engaged citizenship in a culturally diverse and globally interconnected world; that explores not just comparisons but connections between peoples of the United States and the rest of the world, historically and in the present is included in the new proposed standards.

Date Adopted: _____ December 16, 2020 _____ Signed:  _____

